

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A method of vulcanization-molding a rubber material by heating a vulcanization mold and pushing the rubber material onto a shaping face of the mold through a pressure supplied to an interior of the mold, wherein a low-pressure fluid is supplied to the interior of the mold at an initial stage of the vulcanization molding and ~~thereafter~~ after a start of a vulcanization of the rubber material the pressure of the fluid is increased stepwise or stepless.

2. (currently amended): A method of vulcanization-molding a rubber material according to claim 1, wherein ~~a low temperature fluid is supplied to the interior of the vulcanization mold at the initial stage of the vulcanization molding and thereafter~~ after the start of the vulcanization of the rubber material the temperature of the fluid is increased stepwise or stepless.

3. (previously presented): A method of vulcanization-molding a rubber material according to claim 1, wherein two fluids having different pressures and temperatures are selectively supplied to the interior of the vulcanization mold.

4. (currently amended): A method of vulcanization-molding a rubber material according to claim 1, wherein after the supply of the ~~fluids~~ low-pressure fluid to the interior of the vulcanization mold, an inert gas having a pressure higher than ~~those~~ that of the ~~fluids~~ low-pressure fluid is supplied to the mold.

5. (previously presented): A method of vulcanization-molding a rubber material according to claim 1, wherein the fluid is a steam, a warm water or a hot air.

6. (previously presented): A method of vulcanization-molding a rubber material according to claim 1, wherein a time at the initial stage of the vulcanization molding is within a range of 0.5-3 minutes and a pressure of a steam supplied to the vulcanization mold in such a time is within a range of 0.5-1.0 MPa.

7. (new): A method of vulcanization-molding a rubber material according to claim 1, wherein the low-pressure fluid has a pressure of not higher than 1.0 MPa.

8. (new): A method of vulcanization-molding a rubber material according to claim 1, wherein the low-pressure fluid has a pressure of 0.5-1.0 MPa.